



AmeriCorps

2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

Conservation Technician

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service. Service sites will provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision with oversight of service hours and timesheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed) and mileage reimbursement. The 2023-2024 program will begin mid-September 2023 and end in August 2024.

To be considered, service sites must:

- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIJ principles and provide a pathway for involvement at the host site and program level.
- Be a non-profit, municipality, state agency, tribal government, or educational institution.
- Provide a position description showcasing activities that are appropriate to the mission of ECO AmeriCorps.
- Provide a work environment that is ADA compliant, drug-free, and carries supplies and equipment necessary for members to perform their duties.
- Be able to provide the cash match and mileage reimbursement at the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for service-related travel for the member.
- Attend a supervisor orientation and be available for a minimum of two subsequent site visits and check-ins from ECO AmeriCorps staff.
- Clarify any additional responsibilities to the member according to your organization's policies.
- Notify ECO AmeriCorps staff about conflicts or other issues as they arise.

Other Requirements and Responsibilities:

- Confirm member selection, on-site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Main supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).

Host Site cost based on # of full-time employees:

Full-Time (1,700 hours over 11 months)

- 0-3 \$8,000
- 4-10 \$9,000
- >10 \$10,500

Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)

- \$5,250 regardless of size

Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)

- \$2,625 regardless of size

For more information about the host site application:

- Visit the ECO Website for supporting documents: www.ecoamericorps.org
- Or contact Program Supervisor, Dustin Bowman, dustin.bowman@vermont.gov, 802-461-5222

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is sponsoring AmeriCorps positions through its AmeriCorps Program. The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion, or creed.

Name of Organization or Municipality:

Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District

Address of Organization or Municipality:

50 S Main St. Ste B20, St. Albans, VT 05478

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Lauren Weston, District Manager

Primary Supervisor's email:

lauren.weston@usda.gov

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

802-528-4176

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:

I manage 3 other staff, assign work for all projects, and supervise deliverables. I am the manager of the organization and report to a board of 5 Supervisors.

Which hosting category are you applying to? Note: ECO prefers full-time members for the vast majority of our program opportunities.

Full-Time (September-August)

Describe your proposed service project.

[Note: performance measures are based on improved acres of public land, improved miles of waterways or trails, number of Vermonters provided environmental stewardship education or training, and number of members placed in green jobs after completing their AmeriCorps service. Capacity- building activities are allowed. Please describe any projected impact.]

We propose to engage our service member in a variety of our projects including on-farm work such as soil sampling and meeting with farmers about water quality improvements, scoping and implementing riparian tree planting projects (miles of waterways improved), providing maintenance on existing tree planting projects (improved acres of public land), and providing environmental stewardship education both in one on one settings and group settings with land stewards. We hope to work with our member to determine their interests and tailor their service to their goals. We fully expect that our service member will be placed in a green job after completing their term as we are a very well-networked organization and have a strong reputation for producing great work and employees.

What data collection tools will the member use to record the impacts of their service activity?

We have internal tracking systems for all field work and all events that will be used to record impact. We also typically use DEC reporting tools for watershed projects and for outreach and education events. We also have quarterly meetings to track progress and successes.

Please provide any additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position:

We serve both Franklin and Grand Isle Counties, which are part of the Missisquoi Bay, North Lake Direct, and Lamoille River basins that have some of the highest water quality improvement needs in the state of Vermont

(<https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/WID/CWIP/Vermont%20Clean%20Water%20Initiative%202022%20Performance%20Report.pdf>). We have the capacity as a team to train up a new member on a variety of projects to ensure we are helping our member reach their full potential.

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice (DEIJ)? Please include any historical data or details for on-going strategic plans, partnerships, and projects, as relevant.

We have worked with the other NRCDs in the state and the University of Michigan to create a DEIJ self-assessment tool and improvement guide tailored to VT NRCDs. In October 2022, our staff and board went through the self-assessment tool and identified several areas of needed improvement, as well as several areas of strength. We are building in monthly learning sessions for our staff to continue to educate ourselves and work towards reducing our internal biases to improve the ways we work with our community. We also continue to inform ourselves so that we can better serve the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi in our region and become a better partner to them, though we are still working on developing that relationship at the speed of trust.

Outline how DEIJ principles can be incorporated into your organization's work moving forward. (Provide examples of any trainings, workshops, projects, partnerships, etc.)

We have been working to increase the use of pronouns during introductions at meetings, we are beginning to incorporate land acknowledgements at group gatherings, we have several abenaki resource documents

as part of our onboarding process for new staff and we continue to engage our full staff as new resources become available. We are working on writing a natural resources assessment of Franklin County that includes social and economic influences on natural resources that will become a resource to share with partners and for our own staff. We attend trainings that help us better communicate with all community members. We have reviewed and continue to audit our website for accessibility considerations. We have also documented processes for how and when to get our communications translated into languages that our community members speak. We will continue our learning sessions and our efforts to uplift the voices of other organizations around us. We will continue to learn and grow and change our priorities as we understand more.

Describe specific challenges that your organization has faced while integrating DEIJ Principles.

We have had some issues with being able to fund our time on DEIJ, but we have been able to make it a part of our monthly workloads and keep us moving forward. We have a guide for how to continue to move forward as well, and we will keep on that path.

How will the ECO member be included or supported in on-going or future DEIJ work at the organization, if they so choose?

The ECO member will participate in monthly learning sessions with the full team, be onboarded with a number of DEIJ resources relevant to our region, will help us learn more and keep tabs on the accessibility of our resources, and be able to dive into their own DEIJ interests within our scope of work as agreed upon once they start.

Does the supervisor have adequate time and leadership experience to manage an ECO member? Please explain how:

Yes. FCNRCD has hosted several ECO members in the past and currently have 2 former ECO members on staff who really understand the program. I have overseen 2 ECO members and onboarded 4 FTEs in the past 2 years and feel confident that we have the capacity and systems to successfully bring another member onto our team.

Will the member have access to networking opportunities in this position? Please explain:

Yes - many! We are an organization built on partnerships and networking. We have monthly meetings with our other regional partners (many of whom also have ECO members), we also host the regional Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership meetings where we typically have ~40 colleagues from other organizations attend to stay connected. All of our projects are funded by other organizations and supported technically by other organizations, so there are many opportunities to meet other staff. We are also part of the NRC/VACD network in Vermont and are co-housed in the NRCS office in St. Albans.

Does your organization currently host or plan to host an AmeriCorps member from another program? If yes, briefly describe the duties of this other position.

No

Please list any clothing/equipment the member will need that you cannot provide (e.g., hiking boots, waders, raingear, etc.). Is a reliable vehicle expected? As the host site, you are

responsible for providing all tools and technical equipment needed for the position (e.g., computer, phone, GPS, etc.).

The member will need to be able to reliably get to our office in St. Albans, but would not need a vehicle to travel to project sites from the office. All else can be provided.

Is there someone in your organization's network that might be interested in mentoring your ECO service member? *Note, 1-2 hours per month, not required

Yes

Are you willing to search with program staff over the summer to help your ECO member secure affordable and safe housing?

Yes

Many of our members are not from Vermont and are seeking a sense of community away from home. In what ways would you be willing to help them establish community connections? (Housing, peer networks, affinity spaces, local resources, fun places to go)

Truly, we would hope to be able to have a member from Franklin County as we believe there is a need to create positions like this for our own community members. We have a team of 4 young staff who would be willing to help our member find their interests and opportunities. We have some ideas about housing if needed, but again would hope to have a member who is already from our region. We also have 2 staff who were previously ECO members and understand the program and how to connect with other ECOs in the network.

Water Quality and Trail Improvement - Please project Impact Numbers on miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved.

0.3 miles of river/stream improved

Land Conservation and Remediation - Please project impact numbers on acres of public parks or other public, publicly managed or tribal lands improved.

2 acres

Community Engagement Outreach and Education - Please project number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training.

40

AmeriCorps Position Title:

Conservation Technician

Program:

ECO AmeriCorps

Address: Davis 1, 1 National Life Dr Montpelier, VT 05620

Sponsoring Organization Name:

Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

The mission of the Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District is to promote land use that supports human livelihoods and sustains ecosystems in Franklin County, Vermont. We empower and convene landowners and land-users to prioritize and address natural resource concerns through USDA and locally-developed programs. We recognize water quality and the continuance of our land-based economy as key concerns for Franklin County today.

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

To be engaged in meaningful environmental projects that benefits our region and to explore their own interests within our wide scope of impact.

Essential Functions. Functions that applicant must be able to perform. These may be listed in bullet form:

Lift 40 lbs occasionally

Sit at a desk/behind a computer (sometimes all week)

Respond to emails in a timely manner

Drive a vehicle

Plant trees and manage power equipment

Host events

Recruit volunteers

Speak with farmers

Take detailed notes

What are the secondary functions? These are projects or tasks that may be accomplished as time allows or applicant's interests evolve.

Host webinars

Attend trainings

Generate reports

Desired Qualifications:

Have some familiarity with dairy farming; understand water quality issues in Lake Champlain; be a team player but also able to serve independently. Able to serve from home occasionally.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Be a US citizen, a national, or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S.;

- Be at least 18 years of age upon entering the Pre-Service Orientation (there is no upper age limit);
- Be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate or be willing to work towards their GED as part of their service-year successful completion requirement. A member cannot have dropped out of high school to join AmeriCorps. If a member has a documented medical reason/professional opinion why they cannot finish high school, they might be eligible; call in this case;
- Has not been convicted of murder or sexual assault and is willing to undergo a National Service Criminal History Check;
- Must submit to Agency of Human Services checks, i.e. Adult Abuse and Child Abuse Prevention;
- Be committed to the ECO AmeriCorps program, and its ethic of service and personal and professional development of its participants;
- Have the ability and enthusiasm to drive to, attend, and participate in required trainings and events, and be prepared to drive up to 2-3 hours each way

Service Conditions (will the position be largely outside, office based, hybrid or seasonally/project dependent, in schools, etc.) *

Service will occur both in our office in St Albans, remotely from their home, and in the field in all weather conditions as projects dictate.

Will the member have access to "vulnerable populations"? This includes youth, elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Yes

Time Requirements:

Full time: will need to complete a minimum of 1700 service hours, serving approximately 40 hours/week over the course of the 11-month service term, September 13, 2023 - August 9, 2024

Orientation and Training:

ECO will provide members with orientation at the beginning of the service term. Host sites are expected to provide additional on-boarding training as well. Throughout the service term, ECO will provide in-person and virtual trainings to members on a variety of topics.

Benefits:

- Education award of \$6,895 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service
- \$23,000 Living Allowance, paid bi-weekly
- Training
- Childcare assistance, if eligible
- Health Coverage
- Access to AmeriCorps Alumni Network
- Student loan forbearance and interest payments, if eligible

Evaluation and Reporting:

Mid and final performance reviews, quarterly reports, weekly

timesheets, and end of service survey. Thank you for your interest in AmeriCorps!